



**Snohomish County Juvenile Court
Denney Juvenile Justice Center**

2801 10th Street
Everett, Washington 98201-1414
Phone: (425) 388-7854 Fax: (425) 388-7856

Dear Applicant:

We are pleased that you have shown interest in serving your community as a Volunteer Guardian ad Litem, and would like to provide you with some information about the VGAL Program.

The Snohomish County VGAL Program began in 1978. The program trains volunteers who serve as a Guardian ad Litem for abused and neglected children in the juvenile justice system within Snohomish County. The program goal is to ensure that a child's right to a safe, permanent family is acted on in a sensitive and expedient manner.

The role of the Volunteer Guardian ad Litem includes the following responsibilities; investigate, advocate, facilitate, and monitor. Orientation, ongoing training opportunities, consultation and support are provided to assist you in fulfilling your role as a VGAL.

The Snohomish County VGAL Program serves as a national model for many other jurisdictions across the nation. For more detailed information about the CASA/VGAL program, please feel free to research the Washington State CASA website at www.washingtonstatecasa.org and the National CASA website at www.nationalcasa.org.

Please fill out the enclosed application, questionnaire and confirmation memo, and return them to the above address to initiate the intake process for the training session of your choice.

All training will be done at the Denney Juvenile Justice Center in Everett, Washington, at the above address. Please **bring a brown-bag lunch** with you for the Wednesday and both Saturday sessions. We have refrigerators and microwave ovens available for your use.

If you have any questions, please feel free to call (425) 388-7854. We are always happy to answer any questions you may have.

The program staff looks forward to having you attend this valuable and informative training.

Sincerely,

Jessica Gurley

Jessica Gurley
VGAL Program Supervisor

CASA/VGAL PROGRAM
SNOHOMISH COUNTY JUVENILE COURT
2801 – 10th Street, 2nd Floor
Everett, WA 98201
(425) 388-7854
FAX (425) 388-7856

To: Snohomish County CASA/VGAL Program Coordinator

From: _____, Training Applicant

Date: _____

[] I am available for the training required for CASA/VGALs as scheduled on the following dates:

Saturday	May 9, 2015	8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Saturday	May 16, 2015	8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Wednesday	May 20, 2015	8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

[] I am available for the training required for CASA/VGALs as scheduled on the following dates:

Saturday	September 19, 2015	8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Saturday	September 26, 2015	8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Wednesday	September 30, 2015	8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

[] I am available for the training required for CASA/VGALs as scheduled on the following dates:

Saturday	January 23, 2016	8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Saturday	January 30, 2016	8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Wednesday	February 3, 2016	8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Please bring a brown bag lunch for all three days. Microwave and refrigerator are available. You must attend all three days of training.

Signature

Printed Name

**PLEASE MAIL BACK TO VGAL PROGRAM AT THE ABOVE ADDRESS ALONG WITH YOUR
APPLICATION, QUESTIONNAIRE AND BACKGROUND CHECK AUTHORIZATIONS.**



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DIRECTION TO DENNY YOUTH/JUVENILE JUSTICE FACILITY VIA I-5

FROM THE NORTH:

Immediately after passing the Marysville exit take the Port of Everett exit into Everett. Remain on this road (Old 99) until crossing the bridges. Take the first exit to the right. Turn right onto E. Marine View Drive. Stay on E. Marine View Drive for approximately one-half mile to 10th Street. Take a right on 10th Street and travel two blocks. The Youth Center is on the right-hand side of the street, opposite the substation.

COMING FROM THE SOUTH:

Continue on I-5 through Everett to the last Everett exit (No. 195), East Marine View Drive – (this is a right turn lane exit). At the bottom of the exit hill, take a left turn onto E. Marine View Drive. Travel on this road approximately one-half mile to 10th Street. Turn left on 10th Street and travel two blocks. The Youth Center is on the right side of the street, opposite the substation.

COMING FROM THE EAST:

Upon crossing the trestle, take the Vancouver (or North I-5) exit. Continue on I-5 to Exit No. 195. Then continue as if coming from the south (paragraph above).

COMING FROM EVERETT

Traveling North on Broadway turn right onto 12th Street. Proceed through the three way intersection to Poplar. Take a left onto Poplar and travel two blocks to 10th Street. Turn right onto 10th Street, the facility is located on the left opposite the substation.

There is a sign on the east side of E. Marine View Drive which reads, “Juvenile Court – Youth Center”, which will direct you west on 10th Street.



**Snohomish County Juvenile Court
Denney Juvenile Justice Center**

VGAL PROGRAM

2801 10th Street
Everett, Washington 98201-1414
Phone (425) 388-7854 Fax: (425) 388-7856

VOLUNTEERS SERVING AS COURT-APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATES (CASA) FOR CHILDREN

THE VOLUNTEER GUARDIAN AD LITEM PROGRAM

The Volunteer Guardian ad Litem Program provides court-appointed special advocates for children who are victims or alleged victims of sexual abuse, physical abuse, or neglect.

Specially trained volunteers are appointed by Superior Court judges to represent the children's best interests during dependency action brought against the parents.

The program's goal is to ensure that a child's right to a safe, permanent family is acted on in a sensitive and expedient manner.

WHO IS THE DEPENDENT CHILD?

Dependent children are defined as those children who are under 18 years of age, who have no parent willing or able to care for them, or who are abandoned, abused, or neglected and under the care of the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) Children's Administration. A Volunteer Guardian ad Litem may be appointed for these children to represent what is in their best interests to the court during the dependency process.

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE VOLUNTEER GUARDIAN AD LITEM?

Guardian ad Litem literally means "guardian for the case." A Volunteer Guardian ad Litem (VGAL) is a person appointed by the Court as a full party to the court case to represent the best interest of a child to the court. The VGAL role is to:

INVESTIGATE - It is the VGAL's responsibility to independently investigate the circumstances of the case. The VGAL interviews the child, family, foster parents, teachers, doctors, and other involved persons.

MONITOR - The VGAL serves as a monitor of agencies and person who provide services to the child. He/she makes sure the children and families receive the help that they need.

SPEAK UP - The VGAL assures that the child's wants and needs are heard and that the best interest of the child is presented to the Court and the agencies dealing with the child.

REPORT - The VGAL presents information to the Court and recommends a plan representative of the child's best interest. He/she regularly prepares a written report, which becomes a permanent part of the case record.

Since it is the welfare of the dependent child which is at stake, the needs of these children must be understood by the VGAL. The prospective VGAL must have a basic sensitivity toward others, a genuine interest in their problems, a realistic view of the children's needs, and a commitment to the program.

The VGAL assumes no financial, legal or custodial responsibilities for the child. Their role is limited to the specific case assigned in Dependency Court.

VOLUNTEER GUARDIAN AD LITEM TRAINING

The VGAL Training Program has three primary goals:

1. To give the guardian specific guidelines as to the role and function of a VGAL;
2. To impart knowledge of the Juvenile Court Dependency System and the support services provided by the Volunteer Guardian ad Litem Program, and
3. To provide training in the necessary skills needed to perform the role of the Volunteer Guardian ad Litem, such as interviewing, report writing, and testifying. Case consultation and legal support are also provided to all Volunteer Guardians ad Litem.

VOLUNTEER GUARDIAN AD LITEM JOB DESCRIPTION

The Volunteer Guardian ad Litem (VGAL) is appointed by the court, through the VGAL Program of Snohomish County Superior Court, to serve as an advocate and spokesperson for the best interests of a child who is the subject of a Dependency proceeding in Superior Court.

The Volunteer Guardian ad Litem is a party to all legal proceedings involving the child and, barring withdrawal or removal, serves for the duration of the case. The VGAL has no control over the person or property of the dependent child, does not provide a home for the child, and does not serve as the child's legal guardian.

The primary duties of the Volunteer Guardian ad Litem are:

- To complete an independent, objective investigation of the child's situation, by interviewing the child's parents, relatives, caseworker, teachers, counselors, the child if appropriate, and others having knowledge of the child's situation;
- To complete, in a timely manner, a written report to the court that addresses the historical and current facts of the child's situation, the VGAL's conclusions based on these facts, and the VGAL's recommendations to the court to serve the best interests of the child;
- To appear in court for hearings involving the child, prepared to speak on behalf of the child's best interests to the court that counsel for the child be appointed and express the child's stated wishes;
- To monitor all court orders for compliance and to bring to the court's attention any changes in circumstance that may require modification of the court's order. To report to the court information on the legal status of a child's membership in any Indian tribe or band;
- To serve as advocate for the child's best interest at meetings, staffings, or case conferences regarding the child;
- To meet with the child regularly, as determined by the case plan;
- To fulfill continuing education requirements of the VGAL Program, and
- To maintain regular contact with the VGAL Program Coordinator.

MINIMUM JOB REQUIREMENTS:

A Volunteer Guardian ad Litem must be at least 21 years of age, have a high school education, must possess a valid driver's license and have access to transportation. The VGAL must complete an application form and authorize the VGAL Program Staff to check at least three references unrelated to the applicant. The VGAL must authorize and pass a criminal background check, which includes national, state, and local records checks, as well as a Child Protective Services (CPS) record check. The VGAL Program Coordinator will interview the applicant to determine suitability for the position.

The VGAL must be comfortable speaking, reading and writing in the English language, be able to write a coherent report that is fact-based and logical in its conclusions and recommendations, and to assertively speak to the child's best interests in court. The VGAL must agree to perform the duties as described above, in an ethical and lawful manner, and consistent with the policies of the VGAL Program. The VGAL must be willing to make a minimum commitment of staying with the Program for the duration of their assigned case.

The Volunteer Guardian ad Litem (VGAL) is appointed by the court, through the VGAL Program of Snohomish County Superior Court, to serve as an advocate and spokesperson for the best interests of a child who is the subject of a Dependency proceeding in Superior Court.

COMET: _____
LANG: _____
P.C.: _____
VGAL NAME: _____

SNOHOMISH COUNTY JUVENILE COURT

**VOLUNTEER GUARDIAN AD LITEM/CASA PROGRAM
APPLICATION**

(PLEASE PRINT)

NAME: _____ DATE OF BIRTH: _____

HOME ADDRESS: _____

HOME TELEPHONE: _____ CELL: _____

EMAIL: _____

GENDER: _____ RACE: _____

HOW DID YOU LEARN ABOUT THIS PROGRAM? _____

CURRENT EMPLOYER: _____

BUSINESS/MESSAGE PHONE: _____

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF CURRENT EMPLOYMENT: _____

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY: _____

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND & TRAINING: _____

EXPERIENCE WORKING WITH CHILDREN: _____

OTHER VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE: _____

SPECIFIC SKILL/QUALIFICATIONS YOU HAVE WHICH YOU THINK WOULD BE OF VALUE TO THE PROGRAM: _____

AFTER REVIEW OF THE VOLUNTEER ROLE THAT YOU ARE APPLYING FOR, ARE THERE ANY TASKS OR DUTIES YOU WOULD BE UNABLE TO PERFORM WITH OR WITHOUT REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS?

HAVE YOU EVER BEEN ARRESTED, CHARGED, AND/OR CONVICTED OF A CRIME? (A CONVICTION WILL NOT NECESSARILY BAR YOU FROM BEING ACCEPTED INTO THIS PROGRAM.) IF SO, WHAT AND WHEN? WHAT WAS THE DISPOSITION OF THE ARREST?

DO YOU SPEAK ANY LANGUAGE OTHER THAN ENGLISH, INCLUDING SIGN LANGUAGE? IF SO, PLEASE LIST:

DO YOU HOLD A VALID WASHINGTON DRIVER'S LICENSE? _____

DO YOU HAVE ACCESS TO A CAR? _____

PLEASE LIST THREE REFERENCES (NON-RELATED):

	#1	#2	#3
NAME:	_____	_____	_____
ADDRESS:	_____	_____	_____
	_____	_____	_____
PHONE:	_____	_____	_____
RELATIONSHIP:	_____	_____	_____

I UNDERSTAND THAT BY SUBMITTING THIS APPLICATION, I AUTHORIZE INQUIRES TO BE MADE CONCERNING MY SUITABILITY AS A VOLUNTEER. I FURTHER ACKNOWLEDGE THAT MY SERVICE AS A VOLUNTEER IS AN AT WILL APPOINTMENT AND MAY BE TERMINATED BY THE VGAL PROGRAM AT ANY TIME. THE INFORMATION REQUESTED IN THIS APPLICATION, AND SUCH AS MAY OTHERWISE BE OBTAINED, WILL BE USED ONLY FOR THE PURPOSE OF DETERMINING SUITABILITY AS A VOLUNTEER. ALL INFORMATION WILL BE HELD IN CONFIDENCE.

CRITERIA USED IN THE SELECTION OF VOLUNTEERS WILL BE SUCH AS TO INSURE THAT THE INDIVIDUAL IS ABLE TO MEET THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF A VOLUNTEER COURT-APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATE. NO INDIVIDUAL WILL BE REJECTED BECAUSE OF RACE, COLOR, CREED, RELIGION, NATIONAL ORIGIN, SEX, AGE, MARITAL STATUS, SEXUAL ORIENTATION, OR

DISABILITY. COMPLETION OF APPLICATION AND TRAINING PROCESS DOES NOT GUARANTEE
ACCEPTANCE INTO THE PROGRAM.

SIGNATURE

DATE

PRINTED NAME

PLEASE MAIL OR DELIVER THIS APPLICATION TO:

CASA/VGAL PROGRAM
SNOHOMISH COUNTY JUVENILE COURT
2801 – 10TH STREET
EVERETT, WA 98201

APPLICATION QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Write a short summary about your interest in volunteering & how you hope to benefit from the volunteer experience.

2. Have you or any of your family members or friends ever been involved with the foster care system or CPS?

3. What are your perceptions about the situation above and precisely how were you involved?

4. Briefly explain what role you believe society should play in protecting the rights of children.

5. Briefly explain your philosophy of parenting.

CONSENT TO RELEASE INFORMATION

Licensing regulations require a background check on all persons employed by a licensee, volunteering for a licensee, living with a licensee or having significant amount of contact with person in care of the licensee. RCW 74.15.030(2)(b), WAC 388-73-080. Chapter 13.34 RCW also requires a criminal history review of all guardians ad litem. RCW 13.34.100(3)(e).

Your signature on this form allows the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) and any and all law enforcement agencies to check for criminal records, for child abuse with the DSHS Central Registry and with DSHS records and with any other social service agency in any jurisdiction in which you may have resided. I authorize the release of all background information to the Snohomish County Juvenile Court and Snohomish County Volunteer Guardian ad Litem Program.

If you wish to be considered for a volunteer position with the Snohomish County Juvenile Court, you must complete this form in its entirety.

FIRST NAME: _____ ANY NICKNAMES: _____

FULL MIDDLE NAME _____ LAST NAME _____

MAIDEN NAME _____ PREVIOUS MARRIED NAME(S) _____

ANY OTHER NAMES USED (ALIASES): _____

DATE OF BIRTH: _____ SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER: _____ RACE: _____

CURRENT RESIDENCE: (INCLUDE STREET, APT. NO., CITY, STATE, ZIP CODE)

Please list below **all** the residences where you have resided in the past ten years (if they differ from your current residence address). Please attach a separate page if necessary. This includes any residences out of Washington State.

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE ABOVE INFORMATION IS TRUE AND CORRECT.

SIGNATURE
ORIGINAL SIGNATURE NEEDED (NOT FAXED OR EMAILED)

DATE